

Niacin: The Real Story

by A Hoffer, PhD, MD, A Saul, PhD and H Foster, PhD, 2012, Basic Health, CA

Abram Hoffer, Andrew Saul and Harold Foster wrote *Niacin: The Real Story* to inform the public that niacin (vitamin B3) has a broad spectrum of healing properties. Decades of research and clinical practice taught Dr. Hoffer that optimum doses of niacin can treat mental, cardiovascular, arthritic and other illnesses. When he prescribed vitamins, many patients recovered.

Hoffer, Saul and Foster's book explains what niacin is, when niacin therapy began, how niacin works, why we need more niacin, how to take niacin and why niacin is safe. It introduces doctors who prescribe niacin and other vitamins and references their books. During his 60-year career, Dr. Hoffer gave niacin to thousands of patients. His finding? Niacin helped patients feel better and live longer. This book provides research reports and recovery stories which justify the clinical use of niacin for mental illness and cardiovascular problems and niacinamide for arthritis. A long chapter outlines how patients with 25 other health problems also respond well to vitamin B3 therapy.

The only cautionary note concerns niacin's harmless and noticeable but short-lived flush effect. After a week or so, patients who take niacin every day will flush much less. Abram Hoffer learned about the flush by taking niacin himself, for 55 years!

Decades before Abram Hoffer became a physician, other researchers discovered vitamins. Doctors gradually learned that vitamin therapy can treat deficiency diseases such as scurvy, pellagra and

beriberi. In the 1940s, physicians prescribed vitamins for a range of problems. Abram Hoffer read their research and clinical reports in the 1930s and 1940s when he was studying for a PhD in biochemistry. He learned about metabolism and enzymes. For instance, enzymes need co-factors - vitamins, trace minerals and other essential nutrients to function properly.

With a PhD in biochemistry and research experience, Abram Hoffer became a physician in 1949, then a psychiatrist. He saw many psychotic patients in the 1950s. At that time, there were no helpful treatments for serious mental illnesses. Few patients recovered. Careful reading taught Dr. Hoffer that vitamins can restore health, especially if patients have nutritional deficiencies or metabolic disorders. Hoffer and Osmond reasoned that an uncommon disorder of adrenalin metabolism could cause psychosis. They performed the first double-blind placebo-controlled experiments in psychiatry and discovered that an optimum dose of niacin helped 75% of psychotic patients recover from acute schizophrenia. In 1954, Hoffer and other researchers discovered that a daily dose of niacin can lower cholesterol.

Dr. Hoffer spent 60 years diagnosing metabolic aspects of mental disorders and complementing other treatments with vitamins. Thousands of patients recovered. He co-founded and developed orthomolecular medicine as a restorative dimension of care. To educate the public, Abram Hoffer wrote prolifically about vitamins, research and clinical

applications. Mainstream medicine dismissed vitamin therapy without reading Hoffer's books or research reports. Perhaps busy doctors merely assumed that vitamins could not possibly heal psychosis.

Meanwhile, year after year, pharmaceutical manufacturers synthesized hundreds of compounds, researched their efficacy and promoted their use. Prescription drug-making became the most profitable industry in history. Marketing campaigns taught physicians to prescribe a growing list of pills which affect the human body in many ways. Advertising copywriters implied that the benefits of synthetic chemicals offset the risks and side effects. Drug sales skyrocketed. Of course medications work. Prescription drugs do save lives. Unfortunately, as the years passed, many health professionals focused on medications and never learned about vitamin therapy.

Dr. Hoffer noticed that patients taking prescription antipsychotics continued to have symptoms. These pills caused serious side effects. However, when Hoffer prescribed niacin, most patients got well. After learning that biochemical individuality, food allergies and sensitivities can also affect patients who have underlying deficiencies, disorders or diseases, Abram Hoffer developed the HOD diagnostic test and customized treatment programs by adding other vitamins, minerals and amino acids. He

encouraged patients to eat nutritious diets and eliminate trigger foods. He taught a succession of doctors how to diagnose schizophrenia and prescribe optimum doses of vitamins.

Abram Hoffer died in 2009 at age 91. His legacy left the world more than 35 books and hundreds of articles, reviews and editorials which explain that vitamin B3 (niacin and/or niacinamide) can complement other treatments, including prescription medications. *Niacin: The Real Story*, his last book, outlines Dr. Hoffer's research, discoveries and recommendations. His references and recovery stories support Hoffer's concept that vitamin therapy can help to restore health. His scientific memoirs *Adventures in Psychiatry* (2005) detail Dr. Hoffer's research, progress and success using vitamins to treat schizophrenia. *How to Live with Schizophrenia* (1966), written by Hoffer and Osmond helped many patients and their families find better quality care. It still reads fresh and clear today.

If you have a chronic health problem, such as schizophrenia, you can read *Niacin: The Real Story* and learn for yourself how vitamin B3 therapy can complement other treatments, safely and effectively. Abram Hoffer and his co-authors write so clearly that patients, families, caregivers and health professionals can easily understand that niacin has a broad spectrum of wonderful healing properties.

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